



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

an opinion on the subject, from never having been in the Polar Sea. From the analogous cases I have mentioned, therefore, and numerous others which may be found in the records of Polar voyaging, we must, I think, arrive at the conclusion that the opinion advanced by the enterprising and lamented Kane is not supported by evidence sufficiently trustworthy or conclusive to establish the fact, and we must consequently ignore the existence of an open Polar Sea in the position indicated.

The PRESIDENT, in concluding the discussion and in complimenting the gallant officers who had spoken on the ability they had shown, expressed the gratification he had experienced, in common, he was sure, with all present, in perceiving that nothing had been said which could in any way affect the noble character and high merits of Dr. Kane; for it was chiefly the account given by Morton as to the extent of his rapid excursion northwards which had been called in question. Again, as respected the formation of the Greenland glaciers, Dr. Rink, who had studied them for several years *in situ*, had long ago published his views upon that subject.

In answer to a question from the Chair—

SIR GEORGE BACK said—I hardly know how to answer that question, because Dr. Rink, in speaking of the Humboldt Glacier, does not throw any doubt upon its formation, or the similarity of its formation to any of the glaciers in Omenak Bay. I think his idea is, that it does not extend 1200 miles, or as Dr. Kane supposed from where he saw it to Cape Farewell. He gives it as his opinion that the glaciers inside first fill up the valleys, gradually accumulate until they cover the hilltops, and then form plateaus; but with eight or nine years' experience, it appears he was unable to ascertain their extent.

Eleventh Meeting, Monday, April 26th, 1858.

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

PRESENTATIONS.—*The Right Hon. John Wynne, M.P., and Dr. John Shea, R.N., were presented upon their election.*

ELECTIONS.—*Major-General Duncan Alexander Cameron, C.B.; the Hon. Henry Coke; Captain J. Somerfield Hawkins, R.E.; the Ven. Archdeacon, Hugh Willoughby Jermyn; Dr. John Lister; and J. N. Fazakerley; John Robert Godley, Assistant Under-Secretary of the War-Office; Thomas Guisford; and George Stoddart, H. M. Consul at Madeira, Esqrs., were elected Fellows.*

ANNOUNCEMENT.—It was announced that Captain Irminger, of the Royal Danish Navy, had written to state that letters addressed to Captain M'Clintock, and the officers and crew of the Arctic expedition, might be forwarded to Greenland *viâ* Copenhagen.

The Paper read was:—

On the Importance of opening the Navigation of the Yang-tse-Kiang, and the Changes that have lately taken place in the Bed of the Yellow River, &c.

By WILLIAM LOCKHART, Esq., F.R.G.S.

MR. LOCKHART'S paper has been compiled from various sources, free use having been made of Biot's description of the cities of China

and of Dr. Williams's 'Middle Kingdom,' as well as of several native authorities and native maps.

He begins by showing the paramount importance of the Yang-tse-Kiang River as an inlet into the Chinese empire. It traverses the whole of its centre, it passes through its most fertile provinces, at least 100,000,000 of people live upon its banks, and it is the highway of an immense commerce. He contrasts it with the Hoang-ho, or Yellow River, which, turbid and rapid, and constantly bursting its banks and devastating its neighbourhood, is called by the Chinese "The grief of the sons of Hon."

The Yang-tse-Kiang rises in Tibet, and enters China at the richest metallurgical province of the whole empire, from which point down to the sea its course and tributaries are traced in Mr. Lockhart's paper. Between the provinces of Hu-nan and Hu-pe, where coal and iron are extensively worked, its volume is doubled by numerous affluents that drain an enormous territory on either hand. Three immense cities lie close together at the confluence of the Hankiang, 500 miles from the sea, where the river has a breadth of from two to three miles, and depth of water amply sufficient for vessels of from 300 to 400 tons. The names of these cities are Wouchang-fu, Han-yang, and Han-chow. Before the late rebellion they contained between them 5,000,000 of people. The great barter trade between the northern and southern provinces of China passes through Han-chow, and the traffic from the three cities is immense, and reaches in all directions to the most distant parts of China. Mr. Lockhart considers that access to this district ought certainly to be secured to us: it appears to be the most important mart in Asia; half the Manchester and Leeds goods that are sent to China have already found their way there. If a line of European commerce were opened, sea-going ships would leave their cargoes at Shanghai, and steamers would be employed up the river.

At 400 miles from the sea the tides are perceptible: the large American steam-frigate *Susquehanna* reached a point 300 miles from the sea, and the British fleet in 1842 anchored off Nankin, the old capital of China, which is 200 miles from the coast.

The volume of water in the Yang-tse-Kiang is much greater in summer than in winter, owing to the melting of the snows and the heavy rains.

The Hoang-ho, or Yellow River, is rapid, tortuous, and turbid with mud, deposit of which has raised its bed to a greater height than the country through which it flows. It is useless for navigation. The continual repairs necessary to keep its banks in tolerable security create an immense drain upon the Imperial

treasury, and having been comparatively neglected since the outbreak of the rebellion, a fearful disaster occurred two years ago. The river entirely broke loose from its previous bed, and after inundating a large part of the province of Shan-tung, its erratic waters have found a new exit to the ocean in the Gulf of Pecheli.

Mr. Lockhart's paper closes with an account of the rise and progress of the Chinese rebellion. It would appear that its force has become greatly expended, and its ultimate success very questionable.

The PRESIDENT called upon Captain Collinson and Captain Vansittart to state their opinions respecting the navigability of these rivers, particularly the Nankin River, which was navigated by British ships during the late war, and which a former President of the Geographical Society, Lord Colchester, ascended in boats to a distance, he believed, of 200 miles higher than any other officer. There were questions which as a geologist he should like to put to Mr. Lockhart. Whence came the coal which was found piled up on the quays near Nankin, when our steamers ascended that river? Whence came the fossil shells which Mr. Lockhart had given him—shells which established a complete identity between the formations in the centre of China and those of Belgium, Germany, France, Russia, and our own islands?

CAPTAIN R. COLLINSON, R.N., F.R.G.S.—Nearly all I have to communicate has already appeared in the memoirs of this Society, published on my return in 1846, in conjunction with Lord Colchester. The knowledge we personally obtained bears out to the fullest extent the opinion of Mr. Lockhart, that we have in these rivers the means of penetrating into the interior of the country. There is nothing I conceive which can tend more to the establishment of peace and amity between that vast country and our own, than that we should exhibit our power by sending our steamers up into the interior by means of the Yang-tse-Kiang. That it is capable of navigation up to Nankin for line-of-battle ships has been proved beyond a doubt. Beyond that we do not know exactly what is the depth of the river; but reasoning from analogy we can prognosticate that steamers will go more than 1400 miles above Nankin. With respect to coal, it is the fact that we found the coal ready piled for our use on the banks of the Yang-tse-Kiang at Ching-kan-fu and Nankin. The change of course in the Yellow River, mentioned by Mr. Lockhart, must be peculiarly interesting to geographers, showing how necessary it is, in dealing with the drainage of an extensive country like that, to give attention to its physical condition. It appears that the Chinese have gone on building up a course for that river until they have actually raised the river above the surrounding country. The consequence has been that it is a source of great disaster. In addition to the introduction of steamers into the interior, I believe one other great advantage which will result from the onslaught we are now making into China will be to show how they can get rid of their water better than they have been able to do hitherto.

CAPTAIN E. W. VANSITTART, R.N.—With respect to the trade of the Yang-tse-Kiang, I have had opportunities lately, that is in the year 1855, of seeing thousands of junks coming from the north and passing up that river. On one occasion in the gulf of Leotung, not far to the north of Peking, we found more than 700 junks deeply laden, of the value of from 1000 to 2000 dollars each, which were coming south. These vessels would return north again with British goods obtained from Shanghai. The importance of this trade has yet to be developed, and steam will be the means of doing it. With respect to the trade with the north, I think a light woollen cloth would answer much better

than a more expensive article. In the city of New-Chang, north of Pekin, the people can scarcely bear the severity of the winter; and no doubt if they could get a cloth cheap, such as they obtain in a roundabout way from Russia, they would be glad to make use of it. With reference to the trade of the Yang-tse-Kiang, it would be well to take notice of the impediments to it caused by hordes of pirates, who have been assisted by renegade Englishmen and Americans. When the value of the trade is discovered (I have found junks laden which the natives themselves estimated to be worth 30,000 and 40,000 dollars), I have no doubt that the extreme peril to which that trade is exposed will be taken more notice of, and that the pirates will be entirely suppressed. I had the honour of belonging to the expedition which went as far as Nankin in 1842, and I can bear testimony to what Captain Collinson says as to the immense quantities of coal piled up by the Chinese, which our steamers made use of.

MR. CONSUL ALCOCK.—Mr. Lockhart has drawn the attention of the Society to that part of our relations with China which I think certainly most interesting and important—that is, to the geographical features of the country, and its influence on our commerce. I think it was Professor Owen who some time ago remarked that the physiological and geographical condition of a country had more to do with its character, its liberty, its commerce, than perhaps any other feature. It is an observation which I think we too often lose sight of. In China particularly is this remarkable. By referring to the map it is very easy to demonstrate this truth. There is a great chain of mountains running down from Ningpo to the southern coast, which renders it quite impossible for any extensive trade to be carried on from those ports intervening between Ningpo and Canton, inasmuch as the rivers throughout that extent of country take their rise from opposite sides of the mountains. But by obtaining access into the interior by means of the Yang-tse-Kiang you come in contact with an extensive tract of the finest country in the world. The banks of this noble stream are thickly covered with populous cities, and thousands of junks are to be seen sailing up and down its waters conveying the produce of one part of the country to another. The Yang-tse-Kiang stands unrivalled by any other river in the world as regards its population, its wealth, and the enormous traffic that takes place. It is difficult to bring statistics to bear upon matters connected with trade, or with any other subject, even with population, in China; but I am quite satisfied from what I have seen and from all the knowledge that has reached me, that we have no conception in England of the vast extent of the inland traffic of China. There is a greater trade carried on between the eighteen provinces of China than between all Europe and the rest of the world. If we wish to have a share of that trade, and to carry on a commerce that shall be mutually beneficial, we must get the right to traverse that great stream, the Yang-tse-Kiang, to which Mr. Lockhart has so ably drawn our attention. We must go up to Hang-chow, a city which extends some twenty miles along both sides of the river. There alone we should find a new market for our manufactures, and a means of distributing them in the interior among millions who have never heard of them. Although some of our goods may go up the country, I am certain the great bulk do not extend a hundred miles beyond the ports where they are landed. In my opinion we shall never make any progress until we have gained these two points—free access to the tea and silk districts and the central marts there, and the right to traverse the Yang-tse-Kiang and to enter the great cities on its banks. As regards our political relations, I think until we have direct relations with the court of Pekin, based upon a rational footing, that we shall always be met by anomalies and contradictions. With these points gained, the whole of China would be opened to us, and our commercial hopes, which have hitherto been doomed to disappointment, would I believe in a few years be more than realised.

MR. JOHN CRAWFURD, F.R.G.S.—I have never been in China, but I have had much intercourse with Chinese, have even exercised authority over them, and, therefore, know them tolerably well, and I have even made China itself in some measure a study. The Chinese are a very ingenious people; they invented tea, porcelain, paper, and printing; but they have never been able to put two syllables together. That is a remarkable fact. Their oral language is extremely poor; but they have a written language which I believe is tolerably copious, hieroglyphics like our numerals—a language understood by the eye and not by the ear. The oral languages are said to be no fewer than eighteen, corresponding with the eighteen provinces of the empire. I am given to understand that not one of them contains more than 1200 words; that is to say, not more than one-fortieth of the number in our own language. I have seen a Chinese play, and the language is so imperfect that the actor has been obliged to cut a hieroglyph in the air with his fan to indicate what he meant. With respect to the Yang-tse-Kiang being the largest river in the world, it is not so; but it is certainly one that has the greatest population and the greatest amount of industry on its banks. I think the population of its great plain is somewhere about 100,000,000, or about three and a half times the population of the United Kingdom. In stating that the internal trade of China exceeds the trade of the whole of Europe with the rest of the world, I think Mr. Alcock has considerably exaggerated the real state of the case. From what I know of the Chinese, I believe it does not amount to one-tenth part of the internal commerce carried on by the nations of Europe among themselves, apart from international commerce. One advantage to us of the Yang-tse-Kiang consists in its affording us the means of controlling the Chinese, and dictating to them terms of fairness and justice in our intercourse. We availed ourselves of this means on a former occasion, and in my opinion we shall be obliged to do so again. The objection to going up the Yang-tse-Kiang, I am told, is that the Tye-pings, those vagabonds who have been in rebellion for six or seven years, who are far more barbarous than the Chinese themselves, and who are making a burlesque and tool of Christianity, are in possession of Nankin. No terms should be held with these people. What are the Tye-pings to us? We know nothing of rebellion in China; we recognise nothing but the legitimate government. If the Tye-pings oppose us, we must knock the Tye-pings on the head. One word upon the question of silk, and the vast importance of it to this country. When the commerce of China laboured under a monopoly, it was thought to be totally impossible to increase the quantity of silk obtained from that country. The annual export was 2000 bales, and for 150 years it was thought to be the utmost that China could supply for exportation. When the monopoly was broken up 10,000 bales were obtained; then 14,000 bales. Within the last two years, in consequence of the failure of the silkworm in Europe, the supply from China had enormously increased. Last year it was 94,800 bales, showing that the supply had increased forty-seven fold since 1810. In the history of foreign trades there is not a more remarkable fact.

MR. CONSUL ALCOCK.—I do not speak altogether without proof upon the subject of the internal trade of China. In the port of Shanghai there have been as many as four thousand large junks at one time. It is estimated, and has not been called in question for the last century, that from three hundred to three hundred and sixty millions inhabit that vast territory. There is a larger population than all Europe to begin with, and taken as a whole they are the most industrial and productive race in the world. They are essentially a commercial and trafficking race. You cannot go on to any canal, large or small, in any direction, without seeing thousands and thousands of boats carrying the produce of one district to another. They are a self-sufficing race, possessing as they do every production and every soil. They are in truth the

only race in the world that can be independent of every other race, as they produce everything within their own regions that man can desire, and they freely interchange them. Their coasting trade is enormous; there are hundreds of thousands of vessels passing up and down. Mr. Crawford made one or two observations with reference to our operations up the Yang-tse-Kiang in order to compel the Court of Peking to listen to our terms, and he referred to the very triumphant course of our expedition up that river in 1842 and 1843. I think he lost sight of the total change in circumstances. When we went up the Yang-tse-Kiang originally, and blockaded the mouths of the Grand Canal, it was like putting our hand upon the throat of the empire; for by the Grand Canal they were in the habit of receiving all their supplies of food, and up to that time Peking was mainly dependent for provisions upon the southern provinces. We were in a position also to blockade the coast. In the novelty of their position, with Peking threatened and the Manchu dynasty imperilled, it was no wonder they should instantly come to terms. The circumstances are very different now. The rebels have been in possession of the mouths of the Yang-tse-Kiang for the last five years; therefore whatever mischief has resulted to Peking from the loss of prestige and the cutting off the supplies by the Grand Canal has already been put upon them. How should we add to the pressure by going there too? We should only come in contact with the insurrection, the limits of which we could not foresee. It is certainly not desirable that we should come in immediate contact with the rebels, or enter into relations with them. There are strong reasons why we should not mix up ourselves with them, and there is no hope that our going there would in a political sense have any influence upon the people of China.

DR. M. TRUMAN, F.R.G.S.—I may state, in corroboration of the assertion that our manufactures have not penetrated far into the interior of China, that most of the British goods taken to Shanghai are sold to pedlars, who carry them on their backs. It is not likely that these men taking such small packets could travel any very great distance. Another peculiarity about our trade with the Chinese is, that there is more of bartering than of commerce. They are disinclined to part with silver in purchasing our goods, and our merchants are in fact obliged to receive the produce of the country. Works of art have even been taken in exchange for our manufactures, and a number of curiosities brought to this country have been sold at good prices and produce large profits. I recollect on one occasion a friend of mine was obliged to accept a large quantity of rhubarb. He had some doubt whether it would find a good market in England. It turned out, however, to be of such excellent quality that he was perfectly satisfied with the arrangement he had made.

The system of barter in China operates as a great obstacle to large commercial transactions, and nothing would tend more to increase our trade with the Chinese than inducing them to pay for the goods they purchase of us with specie, which at present they are extremely reluctant to do, keeping their silver and other precious metals hoarded up in their houses.

In answer to a question—

MR. PLINY MILES, of the United States, said—I believe the number of Chinese who have gone to St. Francisco and different parts of California have for several years amounted to from 10,000 to 13,000 annually. Within the last three years that number has considerably declined in consequence of certain political reasons. As to the number that has gone to Panama to reside, I do not believe it has exceeded fifty during the last five years. With regard to Peru, I think those who have proceeded there have gone almost entirely under contract with guano ships; but to California it has been a voluntary emigration. There are several Chinese merchants at St. Francisco, and they have sent out vessels or money to China to bring over their countrymen. The complaint against the

Chinese in California is that they seem more disposed to save their money than to spend it. They will not gamble or throw away their money foolishly. I do not wish to speak against the laws and regulations of my own country, but there are one or two circumstances connected with the Chinese on the Pacific coast which have more than a geographical interest. When there was a recommendation from the Governor of California to place some restrictions on the Chinese coming there, to make them pay a heavy tax, not in proportion to the trouble they put the State to, but in proportion to the amount of money they were supposed to lay up, the Chinese very justly remonstrated against it, and they drew up a paper, which was conceded to be a much more able document than the one which emanated from the Governor himself. At any rate the Legislature did not pass the law. I will make one remark with reference to the Chinese river system. It has both a commercial and geographical signification. Geographically speaking, the river system of China is very similar to the river system of North America. Perhaps in civilised and commercial countries there are no two rivers so nearly alike as the river Yang-tse-Kiang and the Mississippi. But there is this difference, that while one has a population of 100,000,000 on its banks, the other has not more than 10,000,000 or 12,000,000. Now, when we come to consider the immense number of steamers running on the Mississippi to supply the wants of those 10,000,000, we can form some idea of the enormous number of vessels there must be on the Yang-tse-Kiang to supply the wants of that vast population of 100,000,000 or more. The Mississippi and its tributaries have in constant employment more than one thousand steamboats, and many of these of very large size. The Wabash canal connects the navigable waters of the Ohio with the great chain of lakes in the north, but there have been no railroads of any extent near these rivers until within the last six or eight years. The figures given of the number of steamers on the great river intersecting the interior of North America apply to a period before the main stream was intersected by one canal, before the whistle of the locomotive was heard on its banks, and before the entire valley had one town of a hundred thousand people. Were the same class of steamers introduced on the Yang-tse-Kiang that run on the American rivers—vessels drawing from 13 inches to 3 feet of water—it would inevitably give an enormous impetus to the traffic of that great river.

MR. GEORGE RENNIE, F.R.G.S., quoted the opinion of a correspondent as to the amount of trade that would result from navigating the great rivers which traverse the interior of China, and the importance of opening out that trade by means of vessels such as the gunboats recently sent out by him to India, which only draw 2 feet water; and with reference to the Yang-tse-Kiang said, that, if not the largest, it was the longest river in China—it was 2800 miles in length, and it drained a basin of 136,800 square miles. The Amúr river was only 2380 miles in length, but its basin was 145,000 square miles. The Hoang-ho was 2230 miles long, and it drained a basin of 134,400 square miles.

CAPTAIN E. W. VANSITTART, R.N.—A question has been asked about the Chinese emigrants. I have seen them shipped at Swatow, and so far as I have seen they are placed very comfortably on board, and seem very happy to go. One of the gentlemen who criticised Consul Alcock's remarks about the extent of the internal trade of China, also made some remarks about the barbarities of the rebels as compared with the conduct of the Imperialists. We have all heard what Commissioner Yeh did at Canton. All I can say, in confirmation of the Imperialist barbarities, is this, that upon the retaking of Amoy they executed some 1400 in about fifty minutes, until the very sea round us was covered with blood; on landing upon the wharf I had the gore running over my shoes.

THE REV. W. C. MILNE.—The paper which my friend Mr. Lockhart has laid before us this evening has brought to recollection many of my most intimate associations. But to refer briefly to the theme of that paper, he has

described the grand plain of China, and the commercial importance of that part of the country. Upon the latter point the Chinese themselves admit that their four most important marts are in the interior. In this remark of theirs they do not refer to the seaports, but to distinct inland marts. These are Fuh-shan, called in Canton patois *Fat-shan*, which has recently been visited by the British forces; *Chu-sin*, 12 miles from *Kai-fung-fu*, on the banks of the Yellow River; *Han-chow*, and *King-tih-chin*—three of these markets lying in the plain of the *Yang-tse-Kiang*. Every one who looks at the state of the case must view with the greatest anxiety the results of our present onslaught at Canton; and we cannot but believe that the ultimate result will be the opening of the great plain of the “Flowery land” to foreign intercourse of every description. We shall find there opportunity enough for adventure and enterprise, as well as for the advancement of commerce and civilisation.

MR. B. WILLIAMS, F.R.G.S.—Allow me to say one word after the remarks the gallant Captain has made. He said, I think, that we had not gone up the river beyond Nankin. Perhaps he is not aware that Captain Fishbourne of H.M.S. *Hermes* sent a boat 9 or 10 miles above that city in the year 1852. My son, now Lieutenant Frederick Williams, had command of that expedition, and found in that distance that the river varied in width from half a mile to between 6 and 7 miles, and that in places there was only depth for a steamer of very light draught of water. Captain Fishbourne has published his observations on the moral and social condition of China.

I think, Sir, with your permission we ought to make some slight protest against the remarks of Mr. Crawford. He designated the rebels rather harshly. According to Captain Fishbourne they have, at any rate, overthrown idolatry. They receive the word of God with the greatest deference and eagerness. They call us brothers, and they are themselves engaged in printing the Bible to a very large extent. So far there seems to be an incipient degree of civilisation, to say the least, amongst them.

MR. CRAWFORD.—A few words with reference to what I said about the Imperialists and rebels. I did not say that the Manchús were a civilised and humane people. I said the rebels were barbarous. I believe they are both of them barbarous, and I see only a small distinction in favour of the Manchús. I think I am entitled to say so much, because the Manchús have governed China 200 years; and on the whole they have governed it better than any other Asiatic state has been governed. With respect to the Tye-pings, of whom some gentlemen are disposed to think favourably, I cannot think favourably of a people that destroy whole cities and massacre the inhabitants in cold blood, for this they have done over and over again.

MR. LOCKHART.—Twenty cities.

MR. CRAWFORD.—And as for treating with them, Sir George Bonham went up to Nankin, and endeavoured to hold intercourse with them; and they were too proud even to give him an interview. The principal leader calls himself the Brother of the Saviour! What respect can be entertained for a party that uses or believes such abominations? For six years these people have been committing murders and devastation, but they have made no essential progress. They crossed the Yellow River five years ago; they were beaten by the Manchús; and out of an army of 40,000 men, only 5000 returned to Nankin. There they have continued ever since in possession of a small part of the country around Nankin, beyond which they have made no progress whatever. I really do not see that we should be interrupted by a people of that description. I have one observation to make with reference to what fell from Mr. Alcock. He thinks that our intercourse with China cannot be carried on satisfactorily unless we have a legation at Peking. From that opinion I totally dissent. I have been myself in a position somewhat similar. I was once sent as an envoy to the Birman Court, which is 400 miles up the Irrawaddy, and

1400 miles from Calcutta. I found myself completely isolated. I was treated with distrust and suspicion, and I found my situation there so uncomfortable that I strongly recommended to the Government to withdraw the mission. They did not, but persevered for several years in maintaining one. At last the envoy was kept four months on an island in the Irrawaddy without being even vouchsafed an audience, until the whole party fell sick, and then the Indian Government came to their senses and permanently withdrew it. Now, an envoy sent to Pekin, 1000 or 1200 miles from the seacoast, and 15,000 or 16,000 miles from Great Britain, would be in a much worse position than I was; and I am perfectly sure that any attempt of the sort will prove a total failure.

THE PRESIDENT.—One of the remarkable facts pointed out by Mr. Lockhart has not been alluded to in the discussion,—the change of the course of the great Yellow River. By not keeping up its raised banks, that river has entirely changed its course. It was stated that this was a phenomenon almost unparalleled; but I must remind my friends, that the Oxus, a very mighty river, is supposed by Humboldt to have also changed its course; and that, having formerly flowed into the Caspian Sea, it was by some slight change of the land deflected into the Aral. Also in our own times the river Syr Daria, at the southern extremity of the Russian steppes, has equally been diverted into a new channel.

MR. W. LOCKHART, F.R.G.S.—In respect to the remarks on the language, I wish to state that it is not correct that either the spoken or written language of China is defective or imperfect: when properly spoken, it is as intelligible as other languages, and the action used in dramas, is not to supply the want of elocution, but rather to illustrate the subject. If the Yang-tse-Kiang is not the longest river in the world, being 3000 miles long, it is certainly the most important, having so many populous cities containing 100,000,000 of people on its banks, and because it traverses the centre of so rich and productive a country as China is. In answer to the gentleman who says that the trade is carried on in China by a species of peddling, I remark that this is not the case, for the trade in China is characterised by larger transactions than are common in other countries, which is evident when it is borne in mind that the trade of Shanghai alone in exports, is about 12,000,000*l.* sterling per annum, paid for by Manchester and Leeds goods, bar silver and opium. The lacquer-ware and rhubarb form a very subordinate branch of the trade. The Chinese who buy silk and tea in the interior are largely trusted by the merchants sending them, who commit to their care large sums of money, for which after some months' interval the produce is sent to Shanghai. As to Mr. Crawford's remark that he hoped there would not be a British Minister at Pekin, I, on the contrary, most fervently hope that in any new treaty the Government will not only secure the navigation of the great rivers, but will insist on the residence of a minister at Pekin, as without that, we could not secure friendly relations with China. If this be not obtained, we should as in the present instance be soon hurried into another war, the chief cause of the present war being the impossibility of communicating with the Court of Pekin when any troubles arose at the ports. I hope when entrance is obtained to the interior that a rigid system of passports will be established; that no person will be allowed to enter China who is not answerable to the control of some consul at the ports, otherwise the same thing will occur in the interior as I have known take place near Shanghai, namely, that half a dozen Europeans and Americans, under the name of Germans, who have no consul there, banded together, took a walled city, levied contributions on the inhabitants, and retained possession for many months, the Chinese authorities having no power to displace them.
